

the Alliance Weekly

MARCH 13, 1957



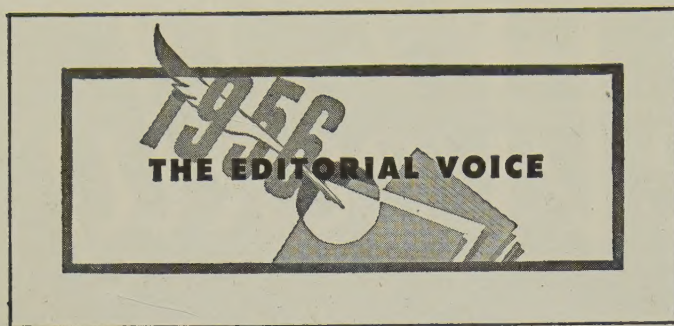
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In this issue

REVIVAL POTENTIALS by Olav Eikland

THE ABIDING LIFE by A. B. Simpson



BEWARE THE PROPHETS OF TRANQUILLITY

Over the years I have read or thumbed through a great many books on how to conquer fear. The cult of relaxation has, in fact, quite taken over certain areas of the religious thinking of the day.

Of course the fear-not cultists are able to assemble a lot of Scripture to support their teaching, but the catch is that practically all of it is misunderstood or misapplied. It just doesn't mean what they say it does, and what is still worse, it isn't addressed to the people they try to apply it to.

The fear-not philosophers all begin with the same error; namely, that there is nothing to fear, and all we need to do to get deliverance is to believe it. To teach people living in a world like ours that there is nothing to be afraid of is to be guilty of gross irresponsibility, and any teacher who does so teach disqualifies himself instantly and proves himself unworthy of the confidence of serious-minded men.

Both the Bible and human experience teach that the world is full of enemies to mankind, not the least of those dangers being man himself. Our Lord said, "I will forewarn you whom you shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him."

A sinful man *should* be afraid; he has plenty to be afraid of. The consequences of his sins, death, judgment and hell are all awaiting him and he cannot escape them by looking the other way. While he lives on earth there are dangers of every kind facing him and every one he loves. Any religious teacher that exhorts him to ignore these dangers is unrealistic, false to the facts and a deadly enemy to his soul. The prophet of tranquillity is indeed another source of danger to him and should be considered one more object of fear.

Where there are mortal perils and no place to hide, fear is the only sane reaction. To dismiss fear while the danger still exists is little short of insanity. Until the danger has been removed, fear should remain. Only that man has a right to be unafraid who has fled for refuge to the mighty Saviour. Such a man knows the danger is there, but he also knows that his almighty Lord will bring him safely through and present him at last faultless before the presence of God.

There are in the Scriptures innumerable exhortations to put away fear; but they are all addressed to God's own children, never to the children of this world. Some-

one must care, and if a man has not cast his fears on Christ, he must bear them himself. The safety of the Rock is for those who have put their trust in the Rock. All others must face their enemies alone.

RIGHT IN SUBSTANCE, WRONG IN SPIRIT—SORRY

In our issue of February 13 there appeared under my by-line a review of *The Gospels* by Kenneth Wuest.

After reading the review a friend told me frankly that while I was probably right in my judgment of the book the spirit of the review was un-Christlike. In looking over the review again I find that I agree with my friend's opinion.

While I must in honesty defend the substance of the review, I must in conscience admit that it shows traces of that flippancy which is quite characteristic of me apart from the inworking of the Holy Spirit.

I am sorry that a grotesque sense of humor, a flair for extravagant figures of speech and a flamboyant writing style (which would appear better suited to reporting prize fights) combined to give the impression that I meant to ridicule a good and honored brother who has surely never earned such treatment from me. For this I apologize to the author and to any others who may have wondered at the spirit of the review.—A. W. T.

GOD'S FORBEARANCE WITH SINNERS

How wonderful is the long-suffering and forbearance of God! Here are sinners who have been for twenty, forty, sixty years, abusing His patience, and misimproving all His benefits. Yet instead of cutting them down, He adds another year, perhaps many years, to their long since forfeited lives. There are sinners who have wasted and profaned a thousand Sabbaths, yet He allows them another Sabbath, another opportunity of hearing the offers of salvation. There are sinners who have repeatedly been urged in vain to be reconciled to God, yet He condescends still to request a reconciliation. There are sinners at whose hearts Christ has knocked a thousand and a thousand times, but though they refuse to admit Him, He still knocks again. O why are such treasures of goodness lavished on such insensible creatures, why is such an inestimable price put into the hands of those who have no heart to improve it? Why indeed but to show what God can do, and how infinitely His patience and forbearance exceeds ours.—E. PAYSON.

QUOTES FROM THE FATHERS

"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing; in all things give thanks. For this is the will of God in Christ Jesus in all things for you." But how shall we be partakers of this devotion unless vicissitudes of fortune train our minds in constancy, so that the love directed toward God may not be puffed up in prosperity nor fail in adversity. Plenty and scarcity may be equally for our own good, and even in spiritual progress we shall not be cast down at the smallness of the results if our minds become not dry and barren.—LEO THE GREAT.

In each local church there are unsuspected fires smoldering—

Revival Potentials

in the Local Church

By REV. OLAV EIKLAND

A former missionary of The Evangelical Alliance Mission in Colombia, South America, Mr. Eikland is now director of TEAM's East Coast center, in Brooklyn, N. Y. He has contributed a number of articles to THE ALLIANCE WEEKLY as well as to other evangelical publications . . .

SINCE the Reformation the Protestant church has had its ebb and flow of vital forces in its life and labor. In times of low tide, when freedom and spontaneity in church worship had ebbed into stagnation, certain explosive forces came to awaken the church. If the established church did not fan that flame within its fellowship it would escape, and like a prairie fire turn its flame on a lost world in intense evangelism. Thus many of our Protestant denominations were born.

In this twentieth century our American church life has reached a low ebb in spiritual vitality. Either formalism or individualism controls our denominational machinery, while social life has become a dominant force in the local church. In some places of worship so much social conversation is going on that a church more resembles a mart than a sanctuary.

But in the midst of this din, this restless movement of churchgoers, there are found other groups of worshippers, few and generally not noticeable because they belong to the silent in the land. They sit with bowed heads and waiting hearts in silent supplication to God, sometimes "with groanings which cannot be uttered." Others with the old psalmist may express a prayerful wish, "Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest." A third group may be sprinkled about in the audience pressed between two tensions, the spiritual and the social, ready to be drawn into the current with the stronger appeal.

Some prophetic voices today are sounding a warning that these spiritual explosives, latent in many churches and denominations, may explode into articulate action, causing a split in local churches if not nurtured within the fold; and joining similar forces in other churches they will form other denominations, thus repeating Protestant church history of past centuries.

Why should we permit these isolated live coals to find a point of contact *outside* the church when it is *within* the church that they should get together to become the spiritual heating plant of the church?

Lest someone may think that there are many churches with so much ceremonialism and liturgy that in them it would be impossible for the fire to spread, we bring a report from one of the great Anglican parishes of London with a membership of thirty thousand.

The vicar of that London church some years ago felt that something

had to be done to cultivate the spiritual life in his parish which regular worship services could not satisfy. In *World Dominion* magazine Jack Winslow tells how this was done. Mr. Winslow was a friend of this vicar who solved the spiritual plight of his parishioners in a unique way. Mr. Winslow writes: "He gathered together some of the keener Christians in his congregation and invited them to pray regularly with him for a spiritual awakening in the parish. For some months little happened. Then two men came to him independently with the same problem in their lives. To both of them he explained how, if they were willing to give themselves completely to God and to make certain needful restitutions, the problem would be lifted from them and their lives redirected and renewed." After some hesitancy and conflicts both of these men entered into "moral victory and a new liberty of spirit, . . . coming into the joy of forgiveness and new life."

These two men who had found Christ anew as Saviour and Lord became the nucleus of a new spiritual movement in this London parish. Mr. Winslow writes: "These two men then started to pray regularly together and sought to win others in their turn to Christ. Gradually a little cell of devoted Christians sprang up around them and increased to such an extent that it soon became necessary to split up into several different cells. Within two years there were about eighty such little groups of missionary-hearted

men and women, meeting week by week in houses throughout every street of the parish and eager to win their neighbors for Christ."

These separated cells meeting every week in houses throughout the parish gathered every month for a union meeting. Mr. Winslow says: "Once a month they would all meet together in the central hall of the parish, and I shall never forget the inspiration of being present at one of these gatherings. A confirmation service was shortly to be held at which some hundred candidates were presented. More than sixty of these were older men and women won to Christ through the influence of these cells. The whole aspect of things had changed in two years within that parish. The church was full."

This London parish was not the only place where this movement brought revival. Mr. Winslow tells the story of how a country village came to start Christian cells under the same spiritual awakening which started in London. Not only in England but also on the European continent, especially in Finland, such spiritual movements, with the Spirit of God as leader, have brought restoration of spiritual health to Christ's Body, which is His church.

Christians in America are deeply conscious of the need that our church

life obtain a revitalization such as that of the churches mentioned above. But the question is if in this country, where church life is subject to denominational divisions and competitions, it would be best to confine such movement to the church as a center.

Why cannot the regular prayer meetings of the church serve this purpose, some people will ask. The answer is that they have become too perfunctory and conventional, and in such regular gatherings of the whole church there is not created that spirit of reverent expectancy which is essential to special acts of worship.

Biblical church history gives us glimpses of such special gatherings with the Lord. Eleven disciples were present when the Lord's Supper was instituted. Only three disciples accompanied the Lord into the Garden of Gethsemane. Of five hundred brethren, one hundred and twenty gathered in the upper room waiting for the outpouring of the Spirit.

Every church needs an inner sanctum where believers may escape from the crowd to get alone with God. Even in a church crowd we are apt to lose ourselves, expending spiritual energies which can only be recharged in vital touch with Him who is the fountain of life. Without realizing it our social life has made us automatons, spiritually charmless and useless in God's service. Unconsciously we are imitating each other, forgetting that the most important way of life is to become "followers of God."

Such a sanctum would become a meeting place for Christians who have a common purpose in gathering together: personal soul cleansing and the beauty of holiness. In such a place the Word of God should be so clearly presented that it becomes a mirror in which our whole inner life is seen. It should become a light to which we approach "that (our) deeds may be made manifest" (John 3:21).

There the Spirit of God in His Word would "sanctify and cleanse" the church "with the washing of water by the word" (Eph. 5:26). In such a place all hypocritical veneer would be washed away. Much ailment in our spiritual life would be

Psalm 37

*Set thou thy trust upon the Lord,
And be thou doing good;
And so thou in the land shalt dwell,
And verily have food.*

*Delight thyself in God; He'll give
Thine heart's desire to thee.
Thy way to God commit, Him trust;
It bring to pass shall He.*

*And, like unto the light, He shall
Thy righteousness display;
And He thy judgment shall bring forth
Like noontide of the day.*

—SCOTTISH PSALTER, 1650.



brought to light in open confession (James 5:16) and this would open our hearts and souls for the cleansing blood of Christ.

In such a Christian cell, where fellow believers obtain a "rediscovery of God's joyous immediacy" and the realization of an "amazing group interknittedness of God-enthralled men and women" (*A Testament of Devotion*, Thomas Kelly), a skylight toward heaven will open through which God's Spirit in Pentecostal power will descend, creating both expectancy of heaven's good things and the preparation for receiving and appropriating them.

Through such cells God finds a way of entry into the church with a genuine revival. In these days of highly mechanized church life, a God-sent revival flame does not seem to be able to find direct entrance. These church groups, or cells, of which we speak will become the vestibule through which God will enter to visit His people in the larger gatherings of the church. In each church there are, generally, a few persons dedicated to intercession for revival, but if they be isolated ones from another the sparks of intercessory prayer may never fan into a flame. When united with those of similar aspirations they may go on to become real revival fire.

Let it be clearly understood that such spiritual cells in the church should not be considered separate entities but an integral part of the church life. It should not, therefore, become a select group within

(Continued on page 6)

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The Abiding Life—in Christ

"Abide in me, and I in you . . . for without me ye can do nothing."

JOHN 15:4, 5.

By A. B. SIMPSON

A second article—"Christ in You"—will appear next week

THE greatest thing in the world is personality. Literature and poetry center around human heroes. In your experience and mine all the wealth of the world is outweighed by a single person. You would give the universe for one frail form that is sinking into death in your helpless arms. One friend, one heart, is worth everything to human affection.

In divine things it is all personality. God is a person; Christ is a person. A poor woman said once, "I have been trying to believe in Christian Science and to love a God that is a principle and not a person. I might as well try to love the grapevine that grows at my window as to love a God that is merely an abstraction." Jesus is a person. There is nothing so striking as the sublime egotism with which He used the pronouns "I" and "mine" and yet it never seemed out of place. He is the only one who could ever afford to hold the center of the stage and could succeed in sustaining the part. Christianity is summed up in Jesus Christ.

These words in my text constitute the whole philosophy of spiritual life and the Christian life. "In me" is the first; "in you" is the second; "abide" is the third. "Abide in me" is one side of the union; "I in you" is the other side of the union. Maintain this union. Make it a habit and let nothing interrupt or disturb it.

Let me speak to you of the first of these three simple thoughts, union with Christ, from His side.

We are in Christ. Paul speaks of himself as a man in Christ. "I knew a man in Christ . . . (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell)," but

I know he was *in Christ*, said Paul. This was the supreme recollection that remained in his mind after dwelling upon this man, which was himself, and the vision he had about him, "a man in Christ."

We understand what it is to be represented by our foreign ambassador. In a sense we are in him; he acts for us. We understand what it is to be in Adam, in whom we lost our innocence and our inheritance. "In Adam all die." We are mortal today because we were in Adam, the father of the fallen race. God made an eternal covenant ages ago with the Lord Jesus Christ that if He would do certain things, bear certain things, settle certain things, God would give to Him a people whom He would be permitted to redeem and make His Bride, and who would share with Him everything in the universe. That is the everlasting covenant in pursuance of which Jesus Christ came to this world, met

the conditions, paid the price and claimed His people.

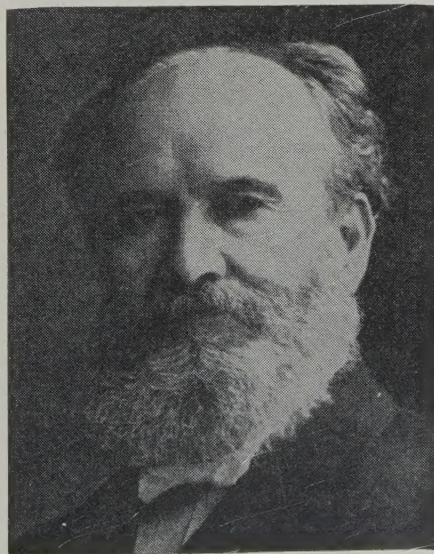
Christ is the Head of a people. He stands for a certain part of this fallen human race. All those who have willingly accepted Him as their Lord and Master are in Him; He settles every question for them; He is sponsor for their future destiny as well as for their personal account. God is not now dealing with men and women separately, but through Christ. Just as Pharaoh said to the people who came to him for bread, "Go to Joseph; I have put all things into his hands," so the Father says to you, "I have put all things into Christ's hands." "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life."

If you are not in Christ you have no God. Apart from Jesus Christ the deist has no recognition. "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." The great question, therefore, is, Are you in Christ? Are you represented by Christ? Have you consented that He shall stand for you? Have you taken Him for your Saviour and Lord and Master and living Head? This is the essential starting point of all Christian life. Leave it not uncertain another moment, but make sure that you are in Christ.

What are some of the blessings that being in Christ brings us?

First, if we are *in Christ* our sins are judged in Christ. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." He bore all your sins. He was judged for you through His own judgment. "Now is the judgment of this world," He cried when He went through the

A. B. Simpson



darkness and the cross, and it is past. "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again." "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." Are you there, dear friend?

Not only are your sins judged, but *in Christ* you are justified as righteous. It is not enough to have your sins put away. You want to have some merit, some obedience to show, some righteousness to present to satisfy God. God requires of us that we shall keep His law and stand before Him with a holy character. Jesus has obeyed for you and me all the commandments of God. He has worked out for us a spotless righteousness which is like His own robe, woven from top throughout without a seam. He puts that robe on you when you accept Him and you stand before God accepted in His righteousness and are righteous even as He.

God can call an unworthy, sinful man righteous in His sight, and accept you as if you had kept every commandment and as if you had lived and acted just as Jesus lived and acted. "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." Are you there in Christ? Are you clothed in His righteousness, not your own, not thinking of your faults or shortcomings or emotions, but just presenting Jesus as your righteousness? God will delight to accept you in His name.

Further, if you are *in Christ*, you are loved the same as Christ. "Accepted in the beloved" is the word the Holy Ghost uses about it. "He hath made us accepted in the beloved"—accepted as the Beloved, as dear to the Father as Jesus is dear. "That the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them." We cannot understand it. It is the great mystery of divine love that God can care for us, but He does for Jesus' sake.

They tell of a Highland shepherd who had a dam without a lamb, and a lamb without a dam. The shepherd tried to make the childless mother accept the little orphan, but she would have nothing to do with it. She was mourning for her lost lamb. She fiercely drove the little

thing away from her presence. The shepherd took the skin of her dead lamb and put it on the living lamb. Then he brought the little orphaned lamb to the brokenhearted mother. She caressed it, lavished her affection on it and took the little stranger to her bosom. It was accepted as the beloved. She thought it was the other lamb. She took it in the name of the one she had lost.

It is a simple illustration, far below the dignity of so great a theme; but that is exactly what the Father means when He tells us we are a sweet savor unto Him through Christ. The moment Jesus Christ touches us, He leaves a sweetness that obliterates all the odors of sin. We are fit for the drawing room of the heavenly palace, fit to be the Bride of the Lamb. Oh, what a wonderful salvation if we are *in Christ*!

Again, if we are *in Christ*, we are sons and daughters of God the same as He is. He says "My Father, and your Father; . . . my God, and your God." "If children, then . . . heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." But not only are we sons, but He tells us we are firstborn sons. We are not second or third sons coming in for the residuary estate, but firstborn sons the same as He. We are not sons by creation. That is a very poor fatherhood. No, no. We are sons of God as Jesus is the Son of God. We are the beloved sons of God, the firstborn sons of the heavenly Father. Thus if we are *in Christ*, we are heirs of all that Christ owns. All His riches, all His coming glory, His throne—all things are ours because we are joint-heirs with Christ.



Quotes from Our Contemporaries

ROBERT T. KETCHAM, in the *Christian Beacon*, says:

"The only reason that anyone is in heaven is that he put the blood of God's Lamb between him and a holy God. The only reason that anyone is in hell is that he refused this infinite provision of the blood of the Lamb. Where will you spend eternity?"

Expounding the text, "The world by wisdom knew not God," OSWALD J. SMITH declares in *The Sunday School Times*:

"The reason science has never discovered God, my friend, is because God cannot be discovered; God is revealed."

Revival Potentials

(Continued from page 4)

the church but should be open to all its members. Those attending will count themselves the greatest sinners, saved by grace, needing every day to get into a spiritual retreat for renewal and cleansing, that the beauty of the Lord may be reflected in their lives.

How can such centers be started? The pastor should naturally be in it, although he may not need to be its sponsor nor its leader. There could be several groups started. The men's fellowship society could be sponsoring a cell of men, and the women's societies a woman's group. The young people's society might be leading the young people into such a cell, and some Sunday school leaders a children's group.

The important principle in starting such a movement is spontaneity, recognizing the Holy Spirit as leader. As in the early Society of Friends, there should be cultivated the true spirit of silence and waiting upon God. Our modern secular life has shut us away from that Presence. The high speed of modern mechanized life has the Christians on the chase away from God. The vehicle which shall bring us back to God is, as it has been always, "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him."

The most important factors for establishment and promotion of such spiritual groups in the church are: (1) That there be a deep-felt desire for such fellowship on the part of two or more members of the church; (2) that the directors be conscious that the Holy Spirit has appointed them for this task; (3) that openness of heart be cultivated between those attending; (4) that these gatherings be always conducted in the spirit of loyalty to and in harmony with the church.

God yearns to bestow His saving love upon a lost world, but only through the church which is His Body can He express that love. Oh, that His church might experience again the enthrallment of His Presence! Then its testimony to a lost world would be the lifting up of the Saviour with such a persuasive voice that He should draw all men unto Himself.





DAVID R. ENLOW, Editor

AT HOME

New Jersey man donates Braille Bibles: A retired New Jersey man has given the Arkansas Library Commission a twenty-volume King James Version Braille Bible, weighing ninety pounds, which will be available to all blind persons in the state. The Braille Bible, the commission's first volumes available to sightless persons, was donated by E. Morris Lloyd, of Montclair, N. J. He also is giving Braille Bibles to other states.

Ministers sponsor Rolling School Chapel: A Rolling School Chapel is being sponsored by the Ministerial Association in Peru, Ind., to give religious instruction to public school students. The trailer is taken to the various schools in the county for half-hour religious classes for the pupils. It is equipped with a portable organ and small collapsible desks and racks which hold Bibles and workbooks. Some chapel classes are attended by forty children at a time.

President asks special admission of foreign clergy: President Eisenhower has asked Congress to approve legislation that would admit clergymen and members of religious orders to this country without regard to quotas or other restrictive provisions of the immigration and naturalization laws. Such admissions, however, would be limited to 5,000 a year for three special classes: the religious, aliens who have served in the U. S. Armed Forces, and relatives of United States citizens.

Church unit plans global literacy survey: A two-year global survey to determine the impact of the printed word on millions of the newly literate was announced in New York by Dr. Floyd Shacklock, executive director of the National Council of Churches' Committee on World Literacy and Christian Literature. He told some one hundred Protestant literacy experts and missions leaders at the annual meeting of the committee that changing world conditions and Communist propaganda have made a reappraisal of the whole field of Christian literature imperative.

ABROAD

Evangelical appointed to Honduras post: In Honduras, for the first time in history, an evangelical has been

appointed to head a section of the government. Rogelio Martinez Augustinus, an attorney, is the new Secretary of the Department of Labor and Social Assistance, one of the most important departments of the government. The new Secretary, with his wife and children, attends the Tabernacle Church in Comayagua.

Evangelicals arrested in Shanghai: Special prayer meetings in the city of Shanghai ended when the Chinese government arrested 500 people, according to one who succeeded in escaping to Hong Kong. He told how the Christians in Shanghai, saddened by the plight of the Communist-oppressed people of Hungary, began to meet together for prayer. Soon groups were meeting all over the city, praying particularly for the Hungarian people. The meetings came to an abrupt end as the government stepped into the picture and took 500 prisoners.

Spanish evangelical beaten: On January 11 José Rosa and his wife entertained three friends at lunch in their home at Casicas de la Toba, Spain. All are evangelicals. A pleasant three hours passed in conversation. They sang some hymns. Then two policemen arrived. After insulting and threatening the Protestants they forced one of the guests, Juan Rodenas, to accompany them to the mayor's office. There they beat him—with fists and clubs—and told him to "take to the road and get away from here or we will kill you."

PEOPLE

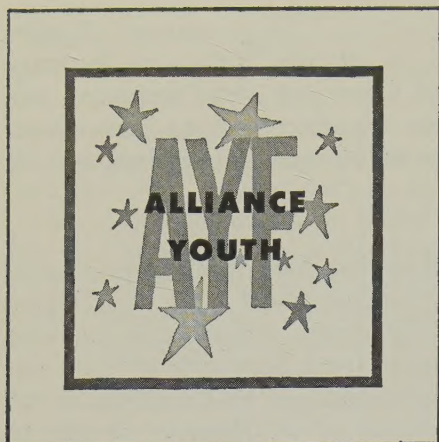
Youth for Christ gets new president: Dr. Theodore W. Engstrom, of Wheaton, Ill., was named president of Youth for Christ International. He succeeds Dr. Robert A. Cook who will leave the organization September 1 to become vice-president and distribution manager of Scripture Press. Dr. Cook resigned the post he has held for nine years and was elected board chairman.

PEOPLE SAY

Dr. Carl F. H. Henry, editor of *Christianity Today*: "Nowhere is half-truth more ugly than when it parades under a spiritual masthead. Especially an evangelical publication, which claims to be in the special service of the self-revealed God, ought to recognize that its every word—even as the word of a free press—is also a word under command, a word whose orbit is the will of God, a word authorized by God both in its expression and in its impression."

MISSIONS

Caribbean Bible center expanding: The Latin America Mission has just dedicated a new dormitory for forty students at its Caribbean Bible Center in Sincelejo, Colombia. A few days later the attractive new building was packed to capacity as over 125 young people from nearby churches met for a conference of unusual blessing under the ministry of Colombian evangelist Francisco Lievano.



WELDON B. BLACKFORD, Editor

AYF Mail Bag

Ottawa, Canada. A letter requesting Mighty Messenger Maneuver material reads, "Our group is quite small; however, we are very interested and willing to do something about expanding. I feel this material will be of great advantage to us."

Pennsylvania. "My husband is an AYF leader and has already organized a group to distribute tracts. They have been doing this for about a month now and are very enthusiastic about it. We would deeply appreciate your Mighty Messenger Maneuver Kit."

Virginia. "We are starting an AYF in our church and would like to receive any information that would help us get started. I have found that most of the information offered has been for a large AYF and I would like to know what we, a small group, should do. We plan to enter the National Program Contest."

Idaho. A letter from a non-Alliance church: "I trust that you will not think me presumptuous. As a reader (an appreciative one) of THE ALLIANCE WEEKLY, I noticed your column on the Mighty Messenger Maneuver. This seems to be an excellent idea and one that interests me with the possibility of using something similar for our youth group."

British Columbia. "I am an AYF president and really was encouraged as I read *The Leader* [quarterly publication to pastors and AYF presidents from the national AYF office]. We have forty active young people and possibilities of many more."

Youthformation

Big news has come to us from the historic hills of upper New England. Alliance churches met together on New Year's Day in Rutland, Vermont, for the first AYF rally in this area. This news may not seem so astonishing at first; however, when you realize that six years ago there were no Alliance churches in Vermont and today there are four established churches, this is important news. Seven out of nine churches in the surrounding area responded, with an attendance of seventy people. The group nearest to Rutland came 60 miles, the group farthest away 144 miles. . . .

The third Latin American youth rally was held at McAllen, Texas, on January 1. The messages of the morning and afternoon were brought by Rev. Eduardo Palici, an evangelist from Argentina. He showed a real interest and enthusiasm toward the young people and their needs. His messages were centered upon the Word of God for youth and stressed the need for the Lord as "all and in all." . . .

A very important birthday is being celebrated this year by the oldest Bible school on the North American continent. The Nyack Missionary College is celebrating seventy-five years of God's blessing in preparing youth for the ministry of the church. The college yearbook, the '57 Diamond Jubilee *Missionarian*, is especially designed as a commemorative edition. The book will feature a ten-page pictorial and historical review of the school. AYFers who are interested in the early days of our Society will greatly enjoy this fine edition.

Information concerning the purchase of the yearbook may be received by writing the Nyack Missionary College, Nyack, N. Y.

AYF Guide

Bible reading plan for school days

March 18-22

Monday Genesis 27:26-46

Tuesday Psalm 30

Wednesday John 5:32-47

Thursday Psalm 78:25-53

Friday Acts 16:1-24

The Contest Corner

Here is a letter from the National AYF files which was received during the 1956 AYF Program Contest. It may be an encouragement and help to you in planning your programs for the 1957 Program Contest. The letter is from California:

"My chief joy is with our AYF group. We divided the group into four teams, with each team taking the responsibility of one service a month. I serve as a counselor of our team, and we have a team captain. This plan is working successfully.

"We set about to choose our program material. I had recently been giving much thought to the Old Testament Tabernacle, and I saw endless possibilities in the subject. When I suggested it to my team, they snapped into action immediately, and we're having a wonderful time together. It takes a lot of work, but it is accomplishing what I had hoped it would."

The 1957 Program Contest is now on! It closes May 31. It is not too late to get started.

Here's An Idea

Publishing an AYF paper in your church may not be a new idea, but it's a good one. A youth paper will bring every AYFer in your group up to date on news and activities. Through its pages you will be able to emphasize matters which may be difficult to present any other way.

The paper can become a promotional piece in that it can be distributed to visitors in your church and prospective members of your AYF. This is a wonderful way of keeping in touch with AYFers who are away from the church at school or in the armed forces.

Here are some interesting titles used for AYF papers:

AYF Beacon, Lexington, N. C.

The King's Kronicle, Princeton, Nebr., AYF.

The Joy Spreader, Central Church AYF, Miami, Fla.

Fellowship Footnotes, Weber Road AYF, Columbus, Ohio.

Simpson Tidings, St. Paul, Minn.

Youth Truth, Toledo, Ohio.



The missionary residence and the clinic and workshop building are located on higher ground and escaped the flood waters at Pano. The school was completely inundated.

G. W. CONN

A River Gone Mad

More details of the Pano flood

By MRS. G. W. CONN

NORMALLY the little Pano and Achiyacu rivers in Ecuador are only waist-deep at the most. But at two o'clock in the morning on December 19, people living in houses along their banks were awakened with the sound of an ominous roar. Before many of them could run to safety, the flood overtook them.

In the darkness and pouring rain they tried to throw some of their possessions onto some high shelves in their houses, hoping they would be above the water's reach. Then grabbing for their children they waded in water up to their armpits. Stumbling, swimming and fighting the strong current, they made their way to higher ground and took shelter in the jungle. Soaked to the skin, cold and trembling, wailing women and crying children huddled together to await the passing of that night of terror.

Floods are not uncommon in this valley, and for that reason all the houses and the fields are situated on ground well above the streams. But this flood was higher than any

the people had ever seen. For some time previous to this the weather had been pleasantly dry. No one was expecting such a sudden change.

At dawn the refugees stood in awe and gazed at the sight. The waters were still raging far above the riverbanks. Ordinarily the streams are no more than thirty to fifty feet across in the widest places. Now they were eighteen hundred feet wide. The water had risen incredibly. Before the main school building was carried away, water had reached the second story. Huge trees were uprooted and swept away. Boulders the size of an automobile were tumbled along as if they were marbles. What houses were not demolished by the initial rush of water were crushed by the huge rocks.

Later in the day, as the waters began to subside, rocks and trees came to rest where once had stood dwellings of the Indians. All the fields were covered by a thick blanket of sand. Gradually the flood waters settled into three, and then two,

main streams. By afternoon of that fateful Wednesday the Indians had built themselves little shelters of leaves and branches. Some of them were taken into the homes of neighbors or relatives who lived farther back from the river. As they began to recover from their shock and make contact with others who had also escaped, their tears of sorrow gave way to joy. Each group was sure that everyone else of their families and friends had been drowned. But as they searched among the refugees they found that only in the case of one little boy were their fears well grounded. The boy's father had placed him high in a tree while he attempted to rescue some things from his house. The tree was swept away carrying the little boy with it.

The flood has been a real trial of faith to the believers of Pano. Most of them are not yet a year old in the Lord. Some of the most sincere Christians lost everything, while several families who pride themselves in their unbelief suffered very little loss. The latter boasted loudly of their good fortune as compared to that of the Christians.

Every Sunday morning and Wednesday afternoon, however, the believers meet together as is their custom. They have improvised a shelter to serve as a chapel and place boards on the ground for seats. As we looked into the faces of the large group of people assembled the first Sunday after the flood, our hearts were filled with gratitude to God for preserving their lives. Although many of them have no possessions except the clothes on their backs, their faith is steadfast. Their voices sing in praise to God who kept them in the hour of danger.

In general the flood victims have manifested a healthy spirit of coöperation. With borrowed machetes and axes they are clearing the jungle for new fields. Some of them had just completed new houses a short time before the flood and are having to begin all over again.

Yucca and plantain are the main food staples in this region, but they require a full year to mature after planting. At the school we had some supplies of beans, peanuts and corn which we turned over to the Indians for seed. These will produce crops in three months. To meet the present

emergency, the government has given some food and has promised more relief until the crisis has passed.

Groups of Indian converts from other places, in a true spirit of Christian love, have sent financial help and food. We rejoiced especially that groups of Jivaro Indians of the south jungle areas volunteered their help, recognizing a bond of kinship in the Lord with Quechuas of the north. Such a thing was unheard of before the gospel of Christ had been preached in the jungles.

American friends in Quito have sent a substantial offering, also. These gifts are a great encouragement to the flood victims. Missionaries located in Shandia and Dos Ríos have kindly offered to receive the children of the Pano school in their stations so that they may finish the school year without interruption or loss of grade.

May the disaster which has called attention to this needy place in the jungle be a means of laying a burden of prayer upon your hearts. Strength and wisdom are needed for the great task of rebuilding not only the Indian homes, but also the school. In order that this experience will prove a great strengthening to the faith of these new Christians there ought to be unceasing prayer on their behalf.

We praise the Lord that the Mission residences have been spared, but there is urgent need of money to rebuild the dormitories, chapel, class-

rooms and homes for the teachers. The Foreign Department of our Society has granted contingency funds to get this work under way immediately, but this money must be replaced from special offerings given expressly for the rebuilding of the Pano school. Such gifts as the Lord lays upon your heart to give, please mark "Pano flood" and send to the Treasurer, The Christian and Missionary Alliance, 260 West 44th Street, New York 36, New York, or to 61 Glenvale Blvd., Toronto 17, Canada.

A Lonely Vigil Is Ended

Since September 21, 1956, Messrs. D. C. Gibbons and G. F. Larson have been in the Ilaga Valley, fifteen days' foot travel from Wissel Lakes. Although Mr. Gibbons was stricken with jaundice and for a while the two men were cut off from radio communication they have stayed at their lonely task.

Their objectives have been to reduce the Uhunduni language to written form, to explore, and to build an airstrip. This last undertaking has been accomplished, and much progress has been made on the other two.

Since they could carry very few supplies with them on the overland trek, these men have depended upon having food and tools dropped to them by parachute. The plane which was destroyed by Kapaukus

on the Obano airstrip was loaded with axheads and other equipment. Cloudy weather prevented the load being dropped.

Later a Missionary Aviation Fellowship plane carried a small gasoline generator which Mr. Ulrich dropped as the pilot flew low over the camp. With this the isolated men were able to charge their radio batteries.

On January 21, Messrs. K. E. Troutman and E. W. Ulrich also set out for the Ilaga Valley from Enarotali. Their purpose was to inspect the new airstrip and make sure that a Cessna plane could land safely. The experience at Homejo has alerted everyone to the importance of extreme caution. A test landing was made on February 15.

After the inspector's report was processed the airstrip was approved and permission given for the Gibbons and Larson families to join the men in this new area.

Already there is an indication that some of the native people are receptive to the gospel. A Dani who has been serving as an informant for Mr. Larson in the language work shows evidence of hunger for God.

A cable reported that the plane damaged in landing at Homejo last October flew out February 23.

How Peons Become Men

By REV. MARC VOLSTAD, Peru

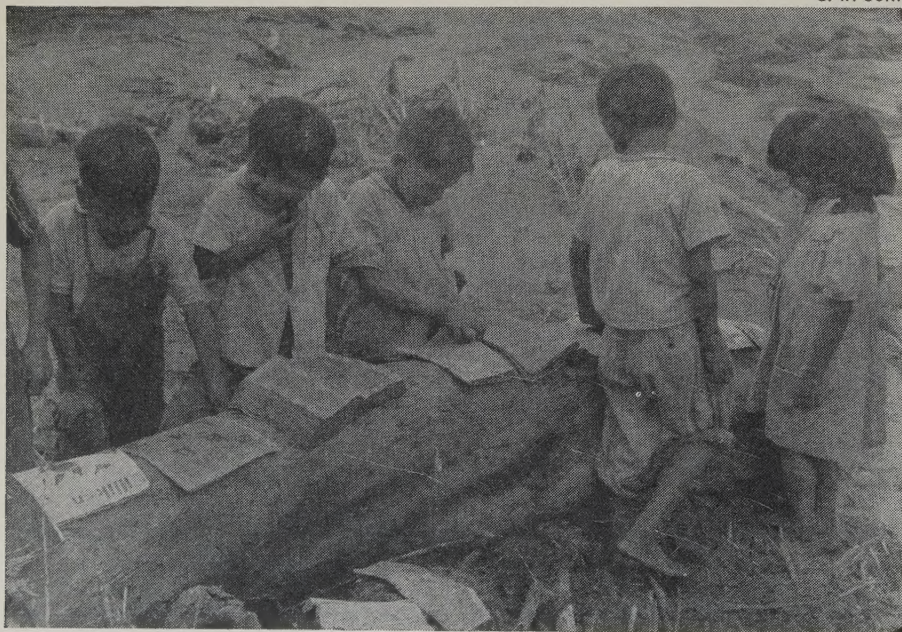
Descendants of the fabulous Inca Indians are described as "unfortunate human beings stranded like driftwood after the Spanish Conquest." A booklet published by the Carnegie Endowment for world peace reports an investigation made in 1951. It pictures in vivid detail the conditions in which ten million Indians are living. The altiplano which is now their home is higher in places than Mt. Blanc.

As pitiful as these people are in their poverty and isolation, and as worthy as are the proposals to elevate their standard of living, we know their greatest need is Christ.

In many instances have we seen some man, ruined by sin, become a respectable man of integrity. Men who once had no desire to be clean now reflect outwardly the purifying work of the Holy Spirit.

Children rescue treasures from the flood—school booklets and a Bible

G. W. CONN



India

Five of the fifteen missionaries of the Gujarat field are due for furlough this spring. Heavy responsibilities must be assumed by those remaining on the field. Pray that God will not only sustain them but will multiply their efforts. Pray also that those going on furlough will be granted the necessary permits to return to India.

New vision is apparent in various phases of church life: the national church is assuming more of the ministries for which the Mission has been responsible and reports on church giving in 1956 show encouraging increases in many places. These are evident fruits of the Bangkok conference. The theory learned at that conference has been taught in some measure. Now the great need is for revival, that the theory may become experiential in the churches.

Congo

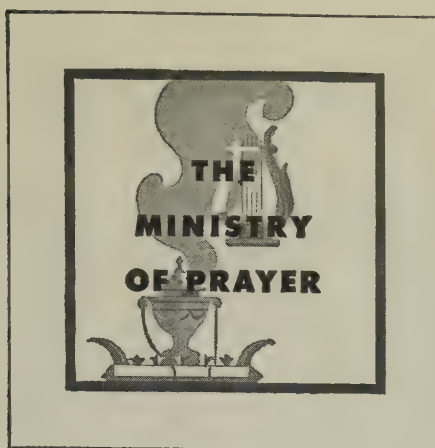
Praise God for the work God is doing at Vungu. People are being saved who were thought hopeless, and there are new buildings being erected. But all is not well. Rev. D. P. Gathany is suffering from constant and serious headaches. Pray that he will know Christ as his victory and health in this time of trial.

Viet Nam

Pray that the spirit of evangelism will continue and increase throughout this country. A number of the Vietnamese pastors give two weeks of each month to outdoor preaching in the villages and market places where there are no churches, sometimes preaching to more than a thousand persons. Pray also that those who have accepted the Lord in these meetings might be built up in Christ. . . . There is word that regular meetings are being held in some parts of Tonkin (North Viet Nam, now under Communist rule). Pray that God will preserve the testimony of the pastors and Christians there, and that the witnesses may be free from compromise.

Cambodia

Pastor Chan, president of the national church, is very discouraged. He feels he should resign at the next conference because the responsibility is so great. Pray that God will help him to know and do His will in spite of the difficulties involved. . . . The national church conference will be held early in April. This will be the church's first conference as an entirely independent organization; pray that the Spirit of God will give guidance and help in all matters of business and will pour out rich spiritual blessing. The church constitution will be voted on and, if passed, will be presented to the government for its recognition of this group of believers. The Cambodian state constitution provides for religious freedom, and many of the Christians feel they must be recognized by their own government in order to secure the au-



thorizations and permits necessary to carry on the work of the gospel.

Laos

The Xieng Khouang provincial church committee recently granted Mr. Saly a six-month leave of absence for health reasons and named student pastor Vang Ye chairman of their committee. Mr. Vang Ye is a Mèo, humble in spirit and of great spiritual stature. He loves the Lord and the souls of lost men. He will also assume the pastoral duties of the newly dedicated church of Xieng Khouang. Pray that his leadership and ministry may be fruitful. Pray also that God will restore Mr. Saly to full health. . . . The Vientiane city church elected and set apart by prayer two of its men for full-time ministry in this district. A Chinese Christian, who for months was burdened for the work in the city and district, offered their support. Praise God for this. Pray, too, that each man may fulfill the duty God has given him.

Hong Kong

During a recent cold spell, the coldest in many years, five refugees died of exposure. In the middle of February, a disastrous fire took place in which fifty-five persons were burned to death or died after they leaped for safety. Prayer is requested for the tens of thousands of refugees who live in resettlement areas, on roof tops, on the sidewalks and in wooden shacks.

Thailand

During 1956 over 400 persons professed to accept the Lord Jesus as their Saviour through the Bible correspondence course. Pray and believe that many of these will continue to study the Word and truly follow the Lord. Pray for the new executive committee of the Gospel Church of Thailand: president, Mr. Chom; vice-president, Mr. Tong; treasurer, Mr. Sumrit, and secretary, Mr. Ngow. May each one be used of God in the upbuilding of the church in Thailand.

Peru

The annual missionary conference is to open in Lima on April 3. The missionaries request prayer that this may

be a time of much blessing in the study of the Word and that they will know the Lord's will in every detail. . . . A daily vacation Bible school will be held in the church at Tingo María March 18-29. Pray God that many children will find Christ as their personal Saviour.

Arab Lands

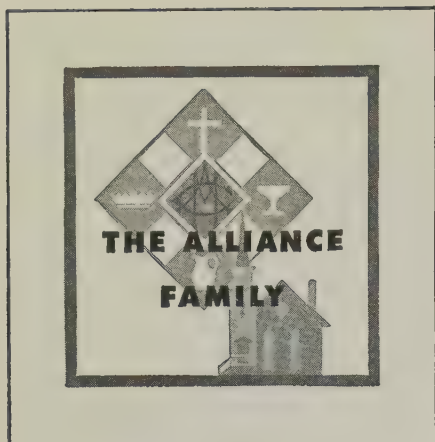
Praise God that the work in Lebanon has not suffered as a result of the war in the Middle East. The Bible school with its twelve students is progressing well. Three of the students are new. All of them are receiving valuable practical training through participating in the several new preaching services, Sunday school classes and prayer meetings which have been started in the last few months. . . . Both the W. O. Brooks (Syria) and the R. E. Wards (Jordan) have had to leave their stations and are now with the G. W. Breadens and M. E. Loptsons in Lebanon. Mr. Ward has been able to make short trips to Amman, Jordan. Pray that both Syria and Jordan will be reopened very soon so that these two families can return to their work.

Indonesia

Pray for guidance concerning the site for the proposed Bible school to be opened in Java. . . . Pray for the district leaders of the church throughout Indonesia who are finding it difficult financially. Since the churches support their pastors they do not have much left for the district work. Pray that God will give wisdom and guidance and all else necessary. . . . There has been some improvement in the health of Mrs. J. L. Van Patter and Mrs. R. R. Rudes but both still need to be remembered faithfully in prayer that they may be restored to full service for the Lord.

New Guinea

From the Baliem Valley comes news that five Danis are praying regularly—the first to do so! As we thank God for this, let us pray the more that God's Spirit will continue to move among these primitive peoples to bring them to repentance. Pray also that God will give protection and wisdom to our workers in all of New Guinea. . . . More recent news states that Gasper, a Biak Christian who is helping the missionaries in the Baliem Valley, was shot in the head near the eye by the irate father of one of the Dani boys who have been praying (see above). The wound, caused by an arrow, was deep and made Gasper quite ill. The boy had refused to go to battle and Gasper's influence was blamed. . . . Mr. Cutts of Homejo is feeling the strain of the heavy physical labor on the airstrip as well as the responsibility for all the other work in that area. He is badly in need of rest, but at present there is no one to relieve him at Homejo. Mr. and Mrs. Tom Bozeman are also in need of physical quickening.



CLIFFORD E. HARROD, Reporter

News reports may be sent direct to Rev. C. E. Harrod, The Christian and Missionary Alliance Church, East and Lane Streets, Raleigh, N. C.

To the Fields

Mr. and Mrs. Walter Pister sailed from New York February 27 for France, where they will study the French language before proceeding to French West Africa to take up their duties in the school for missionaries' children at Mamou. Mr. Pister has taught in the Pearl River Public School, N. Y., for the past two years; he is the son of Rev. and Mrs. Walter G. Pister, former missionaries to French West Africa and now serving in the Alliance church in Niagara Falls, Ont. Both are graduates of Nyack Missionary College and are members of the Wissinoming Gospel Tabernacle, Philadelphia, Pa.

Mr. and Mrs. H. Miller Lake and children, Larry and Karen, sailed from New York February 28 for New Guinea where they will be stationed in the Baliem Valley. They are members of the Alliance church in Johnson City, N. Y. Mrs. Lake is the daughter of Mrs. R. H. Smith and the late B. Leighton Armstrong, a former Alliance pastor. Both are graduates of Nyack Missionary College.

The New Generation

To *Rev. and Mrs. Lawrence R. Berge*, Ralston, Okla., a daughter, Joanne Ruth, on January 10.

To *Rev. and Mrs. Raymond Dibble*, Lewistown, Pa., a daughter, Sharon Edna, on January 10.

To *Rev. and Mrs. Thomas W. Owens*, Grove City, Pa., a son, James Robert, on January 3.

To *Rev. and Mrs. Leo A. Rand*, Yakima, Wash., a son, Thomas Wayne, on January 11.

To *Mr. and Mrs. Spencer Sutherland*, Vallejo, Calif., a daughter, Betsy Layne, on January 19.

With the Lord

Funeral services of *Mrs. Irene Puckle*, long-time member of The Christian and Missionary Alliance Church of Altoona, Pa., were recently conducted by the pastor, Rev. David J. Evans. For many years Mrs. Puckle was an ardent intercessor, especially for the world-wide

work of the Alliance. She is survived by three daughters, Mrs. Dorothy Possiel, missionary to French West Africa, Mrs. Ida Ward and Mrs. Alice Robison, and one son, Archie.

Refreshing at Ithaca, N. Y.

The Christian and Missionary Alliance Church at Ithaca was spiritually refreshed during meetings held January 15 to 27 with Rev. T. J. Spier ministering the Word. Although the community experienced sub-zero weather at the time, the services were well attended, reports the pastor, Rev. L. J. Isch, Jr. Several persons met God at the altar and some testified of physical healing. Four persons professed salvation.

Prophetic Conference Held in Aurora

Rev. Robert E. McKinney, of Denver, Colo., conducted a prophetic conference in The Christian and Missionary Alliance Church at Aurora, Ind., January 29 to February 3, with great interest being shown in his messages and the pictures he used to illustrate. Several persons met the Lord at the altar during the campaign, reports the pastor, Rev. C. C. Dutt.

Blind Pastor Sends Braille Messages

Paul M. Smith, a former pastor now blind, edits and sends free to blind persons a "Light of Life" braille magazine. His address is 1628 Oxford Ave., Pasadena, Calif.

Haven of Rest Home Opened

The Haven of Rest Memorial Home has been established in the beautiful Rio Grande Valley, four miles outside of McAllen, Tex., to provide for retired and disabled home and foreign Alliance workers as well as lay people. The home is also open for Alliance workers to come for short periods of rest. For full information write Rev. Stanley Waldron, P. O. Box 2535, McAllen, Tex.

Letters

Why Not Call a Spade a Spade?

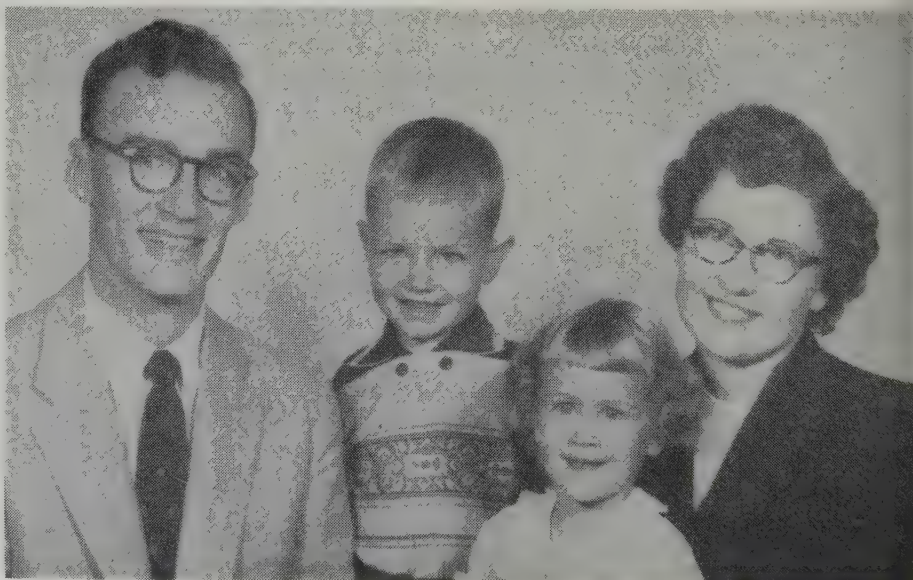
When I read "Devotion that's Measured in Sacrifice" (February 13 issue) I wondered why you didn't call a spade a spade and say that the arrest and ill-treatment of those Protestants was done by Roman Catholics urged on by their priests. . . Only 10 per cent of the people in the United States know the countries of South America are controlled by the Roman Catholic hierarchy. When a piece like that comes out they think it is the work of heathen.

I feel it is time to let the Roman Catholics and sleeping Protestants (in the U. S.) know what is taking place. It might have some effect on their voting to put Catholics in key places of our government.—*MRS. ETTA HAYES, Vancouver, Wash.*



Mr. and Mrs. Walter Pister
French West Africa

Mr. and Mrs. H. Miller Lake and family, New Guinea



Sunday

READING—Philippians 1:1-7.

TEXT—"He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (verse 6).

God means you should accept every difficult thing that comes in your life. He has started with you, knowing every difficulty. And if you care to let Him, He will carry you through to be not only conquerors, but "more than conquerors." Are you looking for all the victory? God gives His children strength for the battle and watches over them with a fond enthusiasm. He longs to fold you in His arms and say to you, "I have seen thy conflict, I have watched thy trials, I have rejoiced in thy victory; thou hast honored Me." You remember what He told Joshua at the beginning, "There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee." There are three victories that God wants to give every one of us. The first is victory over ourselves; the second, victory over our circumstances, and third, victory over our enemies and all those who rise up against us.—A. B. SIMPSON.

Pray for the Islands; Eastern, South Pacific Districts, Mexico.

Monday

READING—Psalm 56.

TEXT—"This I know; for God is for me" (verse 9).

Because the psalmist had committed his life to the Lord's keeping he was sure that all would be well for him. He came to realize through his own personal experience that God loved him individually; that He singled him out from all those that had lived and from all those that were then living and from all those that were yet hidden in the bosom of centuries, to bestow His personal care upon him. What a blessed assurance! What a tremendous and transforming knowledge! Life can never be the same to one who knows in his heart and realizes in the inner depths of his soul that God loves and cares, not simply for the world, but for him personally.—GOSPEL HERALD.

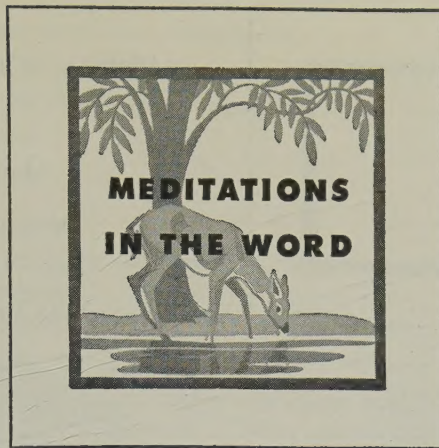
Pray for India; Western Pennsylvania District, Puerto Rico.

Tuesday

READING—Hebrews 10:12-18.

TEXT—"I will put my laws into their hearts" (verse 16).

Every disciple's responsibility is a personal Pentecost. To obtain this experience one must enter into covenant relationship with God, slaying every idol, offering a flawless consecration. According to Paul, 500 brethren saw the resurrected Lord, but only 120 went into the upper room and were endued with power. Christ's command to tarry split the church, as it does today. Neither fire, dungeon nor sword could dampen their zeal or stop their



Compiled by EDITH M. BEYERLE

progress. The upper room is the power room, where prayer becomes Holy Ghost intercession. The upper room is the place where we tap the unsearchable riches of Christ and make His victory ours. It is where common, faulty, human clay is metamorphosed into Luthers, Wesleys, Finneys, Moodys. It is through the upper room disciples that the latter-day rain of the Spirit's greatest effusion must come. Pentecost is His only plan. Power, victory, fruitful service await us in the upper room. Let us ascend.—THE HERALD.

Pray for Africa; Western, Western Canadian, Southeastern Districts.

Wednesday

READING—Ephesians 3:13-21.

TEXT—"The love of Christ, which passeth knowledge" (verse 19).

O Lord Divine, how sweet Thou art!
When shall I find my willing heart
All taken up by Thee?

I thirst, I faint, I die to prove
The greatness of redeeming love,
The love of Christ to me!

God only knows the love of God:
Oh, that it were now shed abroad
In this poor, stony heart!

For love I sigh, for love I pine;
This only portion, Lord, be mine,
Be mine this better part!

—CHARLES WESLEY.

Pray for Indo-China, Thailand; Northeastern, Eastern and Central Canadian Districts.

Thursday

READING—Matthew 24:32-44.

TEXT—"As in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking" (verse 38).

Most people in the church today would rather have gadgets than God. . . . They would rather eat than be filled with the Spirit; would rather play than pray; would rather visit than witness; would rather have television than heavenly vision; would rather participate in a singspiration than in intercession; would rather be entertained than energized by the Holy Ghost, and would rather read do-it-

yourself books than God's Holy Book! The result of all this is a weak, powerless, passionless, visionless church—a church without love, without loyalty and without living witnesses; a church without a positive message of holiness, without a burden for the lost and without miracles of grace or healing.—H. L. MATTESON.

Pray for South America; Southwestern, Pacific Northwest Districts.

Friday

READING—Acts 26:21-32.

TEXT—"Witnessing both to small and great" (verse 22).

Had Paul been ministering in this day when so much attention is paid to the personnel of local bodies of believers, he would probably have emphasized his position by adding "poor and rich, unpopular and popular." We cannot think of this great apostle as doing otherwise, since he was called of God (v. 17) to open blind eyes, to turn listeners from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God, that all might receive forgiveness and the inheritance of the sanctified (v. 18), and because such needy persons are to be found among the nonentities in all churches as well as those of opposite description. Happy the Christian worker who cannot be moved from scriptural ministering by the glitter of gold or the entrance of personages. Of course, we must remember that it was God who inspired Paul to his impartial attitudes. He is the One with whom accounts must be settled after the last benediction has been pronounced!—PAMELI.

Pray for China, Hong Kong; Northwestern, New England Districts.

Saturday

READING—Psalm 122.

TEXT—"I was glad when they said . . . Let us go into the house of the Lord" (verse 1).

When you enter a church, do you seek to become conscious that you are in the presence of your Lord? Pause and think, *He is here*; then repeat, "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth . . . for the Father seeketh such to worship him." Think, *Just now God the Father is seeking to enter into fellowship with me*. Then and there as you commit yourself wholly to Christ and open your heart to His message you will indeed realize His Presence and say, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord."—THE HERALD.

Pray for Israel, Jordan, Syria; Central, South Atlantic Districts; Jewish Work.



THE ALLIANCE WEEKLY is a proved recruiting agency for men and money for missions. Make sure it is read by every new convert in your church.

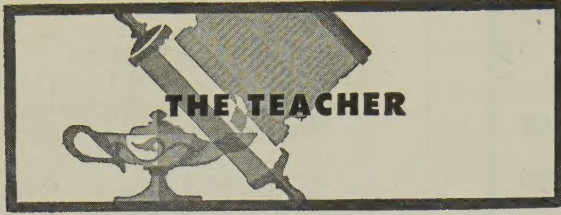
SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON—MARCH 24, 1957

Are We Hypocrites?

Matthew 23:13-15, 23-28, 37-39

DEVOTIONAL READING—Isaiah 29:11-16

GOLDEN TEXT—“Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, . . . otherwise ye have no reward of your Father . . . in heaven.”—MATTHEW 6:1.



BACKGROUND AND LESSON ORIENTATION

Various covered attempts had been made against Christ to cause Him to fall into the trap of making some blasphemous statement or some deprecatory remark about the Mosaic Law. All the factions of Jerusalem united against this one common enemy. Each attempt met with failure. The hostility was now becoming more open. Realizing that they could not resort to the trick question (22:46), the Pharisees began to plot a way to put Him to death without arousing the populace. Christ found it necessary to warn the disciples, as well as the crowds, against the brand of religion that would resort to such measures. Matthew 23 is the great denunciation of the Pharisees. More scathing than the prophecies of Jeremiah, this judgment is an analysis of a heart that practices religion but does not possess it.

SIMPLIFIED OUTLINE

1. *Woes Against Social Malpractice*—Matthew 23:13-15.
2. *Woes Against Personal Hypocrisy*—Matthew 23:23-28.
3. *The Cry of Everlasting Love*—Matthew 23:37-39.

KEY WORD ANALYSIS

(1) “Proselyte”—*proseluton* (v. 15), probably derived from a compound verb meaning “to come toward.” It means one who has arrived, therefore a stranger or alien. In the New Testament it has come to mean one who became a convert to Judaism or alien converts to the Jewish religion. The word has an Old Testament significance because the

Septuagint used it to denote the “stranger” who lived in Israel.

(2) “Mint,” “anise,” “cummin” (v. 23)—*heduosmon*, a compound word meaning sweet smell; *anethon*, equivalent to dill, used for pickling; *kuminon*, a plant with strong aromatic seeds used as a spice for seasoning. These minor details were cited to demonstrate the minutiae of observance.

COMMENTARY ON THE PRINTED TEXT

1. *Woes Against Social Malpractice* (Matt. 23:13-15).

The woe which Christ used was a form of indignation, deep sorrow or denunciation. It flowed from an outraged holiness. The Pharisees stood like watchdogs before the gates of Judaism, permitting only those whom they approved to enter. Thus the sincere might have been turned away by the rigid but meaningless ritual. The unworthy might find a welcome because they were willing to court favor.

Behind the guise of religion these hypocrites thought nothing of making themselves rich or of exploiting the poor and unprotected by tampering with the laws. They would also allow laws to be passed to gain legally their own selfish ends. Behind the front of zealous activity to find recruits for Judaism, they were creating bigots who were outstripping them in hypocrisy. These analyses not only exposed Christ's enemies, but commended His own love for truth, equity and pure religion.

2. *Woes Against Personal Hypocrisy* (Matt. 23:23-28).

Christ scathingly denounced the inconsistency of giving attention to minutiae of ritual religion and overlooking the qualities that make a man Godlike. The former without the latter reduces religion to absurdity.

These hypocrites could swallow inequities and condone issues that would strangle a morally honest man while at the same time they would make a mountain out of the smallest legal issue. They would go to the greatest pains the Law demanded to observe their ritual washings, but inwardly they were hardened and morally perverted.

The metaphorical language adopted by Christ leaves little doubt in anyone's mind that He had nothing but loathing for anything that was false and fruitless. The graveyard figure was especially graphic. Any contact with the dead would render these men ceremonially unclean and require a long ritual of purification. Christ likens them to the sepulchre itself filled with the stench and pollution of death.

3. *The Cry of Everlasting Love* (Matt. 23: 37-39).

The secret of the effectiveness of this radical denunciation lies in the fact that it was pronounced with a broken heart. There is nothing more dangerous to any man of God than a concept of divine judgment without a heart of love with which to deliver it effectively. At Israel's lowest ebb God punctuated His sternest woes with declarations of everlasting love.

With a heart breaking with compassion and love, Christ cried for the city to leave its desperate apostasy and flee from the wrath of God—even as a chick runs from the circling hawk to the shelter of its mother's wings. There was a willful, deliberate rejection of the truth in preference to a lying religion. There would be nothing left in Jerusalem but the empty shell of a Temple from which God had in wrath departed.

Israel's Messiah was here giving her religious capital a final call. They would never again have this opportunity to turn back to God. The next opportunity would be framed in judgment. Their next declaration of loyalty to Him would be prompted by the force of awesome circumstances.

this denunciation so unlike His usual message of love and mercy. The objective should be to make it clear that the same failures apparent in us today will call for the same wrath and issue in the same ultimate judgment.

HELPFUL HINTS FOR LESSON PREPARATION

This is a lesson with one theme, one approach and one objective. The theme is *woe*. The approach should therefore be to show the outraged holiness of the Messiah which prompted

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Wilmington, N. C. March 18-20
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Carolina Beach, N. C. March 21-24

Southwestern District

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El Paso, Tex. March 21-24
Oklahoma City, Okla. March 17-24

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Detroit, Mich. March 18-24
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Canton, Ohio March 18-24

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Berkeley (Neighborhood) March 19-24
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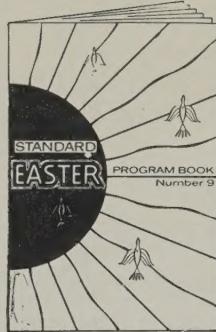
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ALLIANCE MISSIONS ON THE MARCH



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Miss Betty Arnold and assistant in Chinese bookroom, Saigon

Chinese Christians Promote Bookroom

A HALF-MILLION Chinese in Saigon were unaware that Christian books were for sale in a private home. A missionary was importing small supplies of gospel literature from Hong Kong but only a few Christians knew about it. Both missionaries and Chinese Christians realized the great need for an adequate distribution center for the Word and this became a subject for much earnest prayer. This is how the Lord answered in Saigon-Cholon, South Viet Nam.

A suitable place became available when a Chinese Christian offered the front part of her downstairs apartment. She refused enticing offers from business concerns because she wanted this choice place devoted to the work of the Lord. . . . A Christian contractor calcimined the interior of the room for a very reasonable price. . . . Good light fixtures are important so that passers-by may be attracted and can easily see to read. A Christian couple who live next door to the new bookroom supplied these. The only cost was for installation. . . . The necessary carpentry work was done at a price lower than anticipated. . . . Discarded military office equipment was available at a bargain price. This took care of the reading tables and supply cupboards. New table tops of plywood and a little paint to make everything match transformed the old furniture, making it all look like new. . . . Gifts of chairs, a ceiling fan, a clock and money, all from Chinese Christians, completed the equipment. . . . An offering taken by the Saigon American Community Church was sufficient to cover the first year's rent.

On the opening day a Chinese evangelist from Hong Kong, Rev. Newman Shek, was present to speak at the dedication service. There is every indication that God's blessing is on this venture and that through people responsive to His will He will see that His name is published abroad. The seed is being sown. Let us water it with tears of intercession.

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